

MATWATCH

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VOL. 4, NO. 47

NOV. 25-DEC. 1



**THIS
WEEK'S
HEADLINES**

Power Hour Busts Saturday Record

ATLANTA---WCW's POWER HOUR, riding the tide of nearly two months of TBS ratings success, has smashed its previous Saturday morning viewing record.

For the episode of Nov. 16, POWER posted a 2.2 rating and 8.8 per cent share of audience (1.27 million homes).

POWER HOUR came within one-tenth of a point of tying WWF PRIME TIME WRESTLING for the first time ever since its move to Saturday in October 1990.

For more on the weekly ratings race, see RATINGS RAP, page 6.

Eddie Gilbert Joins Global Bookers

ATLANTA---Global TV champion Eddie Gilbert is the newest member of the GWF team of bookers.

Gilbert will add creative direction to Global tapings, effective with this weekend's tapings in Dallas. He takes the slot vacated by original GWF series producer Bill Eadie, who departed two weeks ago.

"Eddie offered his services," said Pedicino. "Everybody knows the dimension he brings to a wrestling show and we're glad to have him."

York, Long Handed Parting Gifts

ATLANTA---Alexandra York (Terri Lynn Boatright) and Teddy Long have reportedly been handed pinkslips by World Championship Wrestling, though Long is expected to be around longer than York.

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Best Since September 1990

CLASH: IS IT THE ROAD BACK?

One show does not an ailing promotion resuscitate. But it can be a start. Whether last week's CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS in Savannah refocuses arena interest in World Championship Wrestling is arguable. But it has stemmed a year of negative ratings momentum.

CLASH scored a 4.3 rating and 6.1 per cent share of audience---the best since the 5.0 for the September 1990 special which featured record numbers for Ric Flair-Lex Luger and Sting-Black Scorpion matches.

Overall, the show was up from the 4.2 for last year's critically-panned THANKSGIVING THUNDER and the 2.46 million homes watching were up 6% from last November's 2.32 million.

One interesting sidelight: the Rick Steiner-Lex Luger main event did not draw the top audience on the night. The dramatic Ricky Steamboat/Dustin Rhodes WCW world tag title win over the Enforcers and the Sting-Rick Rude U.S. title bout both scored 4.7 ratings. The Sting-Rude encounter nosed out the tag thriller by 20,000 homes, 2.706 million-2.704 million.



Steve

Beverly

CLASH BY QUARTERS

8:05 3.8/5.7	9:15 4.7/6.4
8:15 3.7/5.4	9:30 4.6/6.3
8:30 4.1/5.9	9:45 4.3/5.9
8:45 4.2/6.0	10:00 4.7/6.7
9:00 4.3/6.0	10:15 4.5/6.6

The Savannah show jumped out to a much hotter start than the three earlier ones this year, all of which scored below a 4 rating. The opening quarter-hour drew a 3.8/5.7. That matched the total rating for the September CLASH.

Part of the irony is only close insiders knew of Steamboat's appearance. But casual fans had been presented enough of a mystery over Barry Windham's status which could have cued a tune-in. Plus,

the early-show attack on Sting, whose TV pull is likely underestimated after nearly a year without the WCW world belt, gave viewers enough of a hook to see if he would return for his title bout.

Why the falloff for the Luger-Steiner match after the constant repeat showings of Rick's upset over Lex on WORLD WIDE WRESTLING? Two possible reasons: 1) the crescendo of the Steamboat/Rhodes victory and the heat over the Rude win virtually made the world title bout anticlimactic; and 2) when only 14 minutes of show time remained as Luger and Steiner were introduced, most viewers are knowledgeable enough to know no fireworks would happen with the top title. Again, it is a testimony that if the major belt is to have substance, time must be given to convince watchers a world title match is more than a simple TV time limit affair.

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York, Long (Continued from Page 1)

Word surfaced of the moves at the Nov. 19 CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS. Other than Harley Race, WCW is shifting its managerial focus to Paul E. Dangerously and Madusa Miceli. Paul's entire Dangerous Alliance was revealed on TBS Saturday. Jeannie Clarke was earlier dropped as valet for WCW TV champ Steve Austin.

Long was still booked for this week's WCW TV tapings and is expected to be used sporadically until his contract expires in the first quarter of next year.

FINAL MATWATCH RATES

If your mailing label says FINAL ISSUE, the cost to subscribe through the closing issue of MATWATCH Jan. 27, 1992, is \$11 (U.S./Canada), \$16.50 (Overseas).

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1992 Annual

MATWATCH: THE FINAL CHAPTER

The stories and people making MATWATCH come alive during four years will be revisited in MATWATCH: THE FINAL CHAPTER, our final annual, to be published in late February.

In addition to new stories and views, we'll name our MATWATCH MAN OF THE YEAR, review the top 15 TV news stories of 1991 and offer the 1992 schedule for the Wrestling Broadcasting System.

PRICE: \$13 (U.S./CANADA), \$21 (OVERSEAS). Check, cash, or money order to: MATWATCH, 16 ROBIN HOOD LANE, JACKSON TN 38305.

STEVE BEVERLY

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Ironically, the ratings resurgence, along with the strong fall turnaround of the Saturday evening WCW show is being credited, in large part, internally to the renewed influence of Jim Crockett. The man who lost controlling interest in this company in 1989 reportedly played the major role in resigning Ricky Steamboat and championed the return of Paul E. Dangerously after WCW executive vice president Jim Herd suspended the 26-year-old Scarsdale NY native in October. Crockett is being credited for the creation of the Dangerous Alliance and the focus on the WCW heel side on Dangerously to the exclusion of the female and secondary male managers.

But the strong focus on TV ratings is not paying off at arenas (see MATWATCHING) and may not. The gut feeling from here is that while a rejuvenated Steamboat and likely intensity of a Sting-Rude feud will continue to undergird audience levels, it will likely not result in a new flock to the turnstiles, except for what is perceived as the genuinely big, storyline-changing show.

However, this group is doing exactly what TBS wants as its top priority: providing good TV ratings. And the increasing numbers prove one thing: WCW is capable of delivering large audiences without a Ric Flair. From a television standpoint, coming out from under the shroud of the dominant character and storyline of six years on TBS may have been the best thing to happen to this much-maligned company.

FALL CLASH RATINGS

New York Knockouts (1990) 4.8/7.4,
2.52 million.
Season's Beatings (1988) 4.5/6.8,
2.17 million.
Clash XVII (1991) 4.3/6.1, 2.46
million.
Thanksgiving Thunder (1990),
4.2/6.2, 2.32 million.

50 Years of Mat TV, Part VI

THE CABLE/SATELLITE ERA

As the mid-1970s dawned, subtle changes in societal practices and entertainment tastes were taking place. New economic patterns forced many middle and lower class Americans into financial struggle. However, the nation's love affair with sports continued to explode.

Major league baseball and the National Football League were in the midst of record big-money network contracts. The Dallas-Pittsburgh Super Bowl in January 1976 became the first NFL title match to outpoint the World Series in audience ratings.

In 1975, former basketball and World Football League TV distributor Eddie Einhorn's stab at a national wrestling promotion with his syndicated International Wrestling Association died in 26 weeks as NWA and WWWF promoters froze the IWA out of key buildings in major cities.

In the process, local Atlanta independent TV station owner Ted Turner, who had been expanding coverage for his WTCG into seven states by microwave, read an article in BROADCASTING magazine about the future of communications satellites. Why, Turner wondered, couldn't these same satellites be used to distribute a local station nationwide? As author Harry Castleman writes: "He (Turner) realized that, unlike many city dwellers, rural Southern viewers had rarely been offered a choice beyond network affiliates because there were few independents operating in their areas."

On December 17, 1976, WTCG officially became available to any cable system with a satellite downlink. Its top-rated program: GEORGIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING. Within a year, an expanding number of cities became familiar with a man in a black-and-white mask who had already captured the imagination of the South with his "million-dollar knee," Mr. Wrestling II.

By 1979, the superstition was seen in 43 states. In 1977, a national audience saw Wrestling II upset NWA world champion Terry Funk on the Atlanta program. Dr. Gerald Morton theorizes on the Wrestling II phenomenon: "Their very names (Wrestling II and the original Mr. Wrestling---Tim Woods) and white masks suggest that they embody the

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IDIOTS

Nov. 21-24

(LUCHA LIBRE) - [CLIP] The Love Machine (Art Barr); Love Machine/Black Magic/La Mascara Sagrada d. Pierroth Jr./Blue Panther/Jerry Estrada 2-3; Anibal/Lizmark/Perdo Aguayo d. Cien Caras/Mascara Ano Dos Mil/Universo Dos Mil 2 straight; (CAPTAIN'S BATTLE ROYAL) 1. El Brazo de Oro d. Octagon. 2. Atlantis d. El Satanico; (6-MAN) El Satanico/MS 1/El Pirata Morgan d. Octagon/El Dandy/Konnan el Barbaro; Los Mosqueteros del Diablo/de Oro/El Braza de Plata d. Atlantis/Super Astro/El Angel Azteca. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(IWF) - [2 Wks. Ago]: Chubby McCool d. Dennis Allen; Rick Diamond d. Mike Dibacco; Dynamite Express double DQ vs. Bad Boys; Mondo Kleen d. Crocodile Mackenzie; Heartbreakers d. Chris Proctor/John Boyd; Thunder & Lightning d. Java Roop/Shocker. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

[Last Week]: Nuclear Assassins d. T & L by countout when Cain distracts Thunder outside; Kleen d. Dibacco; Incredible Thor d. Purple Terror; Heartbreakers d. Caribbean Kid/Dennis Allen; McCool/Proctor d. Possessor/Diamond by DQ; Cliff Anderson d. Tito McKenzie. RESTHOLD.

(LPWA) - Susan Sexton d. Flame; Magnificent Mimi d. Sindee Paradise; Judy Martin/Lelani Kai d. Terri Power/Malaya Hosaka; Bambi d. Candi Divine; Reggie Bennett d. Black Venus; Nasty Girls d. Sweet Georgia Brown/Alma Alvarez. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(NEW PWTW) - [GA/1990] Randy Rose/Big Red d. Abdullah the Butcher/The Sheik; (GLOBAL) 1. Scott Anthony d. Chaz. 2. Davis Bros. d. Ben Jordan/Terry Daniels; (INJURY UPDATE) Dr. Joe Teel on jammed toes; (CLASSIC/AWA TAG TITLE) Pat Tanaka/Paul Diamond draw vs. Brad Rheingans/Tommy Jammer; (LPWA) Misty Blue Simmes/Allison Royal d. Nasty Girls; (CALGARY) Steve DiSalvo d. Carlo DeFassi. RESTHOLD.

(SUNCOAST PRO) - Master Blaster d. Poison Ivy; (DEMONSTRATION) Tommy Rogers/Ian Weston/Jumbo Baretta show suplexes/bridging; Billy Freedom d. Dave Johnson. NO RATING.

(IWCCW) - Mondo Kleen d. Zap; Kevin Sullivan/Mark Lewin d. Eric Sapracia/Bob Palmer; Ray Oddyssey d. Crusader; (PWI REPORT) Buddy Landell guests; Cannonball d. T.D. Madison. BOMB-PLUS.

(GLOBAL/SYN) - [MAJOR LEAGUE]: Black Bart d. Mike Stetson; (REPLAY) Mike Davis/Lightning Kid attack Chaz & Tug Taylor saves; (SEG) Tug reveals Chaz is his son; Davis d. Larry Greene; Taylor d. Frogman LeBlanc; Bill Irwin d. Scott Anthony; Renegade Warriors d. Buster Blackheart/Tony George. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

[MAIN EVENTS]: Gary Young d. Greene; (BATTLE ROYAL) Terry Garvin wins 12-man event; Sam Houston d. Sweet Daddy Falcone; Eddie Gilbert d. Garvin. DRAW.

(WWF/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: Rockers d. Kato/Brooklyn Brawler; (SPECIAL REPORT) Ric Flair/Undertaker attack Hulk Hogan; Mountie d. Curt Stiles; (FEATURE) Repo Man; Jim Duggan d. Jerry Saggs by DQ when Brian Knobbs runs in & bashes Jim w. American flag. Sgt. Slaughter saves w. double clothesline, saves the flag, gives it to Duggan, who offers a handshake; (SEG) Randy Savage begs Jack Tunney to be reinstated for SURVIVOR SERIES. Tunney says he'll

take it "under advisement;" Davey Boy Smith d. Tom Stone; (SURVIVOR SERIES UPDATE) Sarge speculated as sub for Jim Neidhart; (BARBER SHOP) Brutus Beefcake w. Undertaker/Paul Bearer; Beverly Bros. d. Reno Riggins/Major Yates. DRAW.

[SUPERSTARS]: {SHOW OPEN} Flair/Undertaker attack on Hogan; Tio Santana d. Bob Smedley; Kerry Von Erich d. Greg Green; (I-C TITLE) Bret Hart d. Big Bully Busick to retain belt; (SEG) Liz Poffo says she hopes Tunney will listen to people & reinstate Randy; Skinner Keirn d. Ben Jordan; (MEAN GENE) Hogan says he'll eliminate Undertaker & Flair, too; (S.S. UPDATE) Big Bossman/Road Warriors demand to know if Savage will replace Sid Justice; Jake Roberts d. Bob Warner; (ANGLE) Jake taunts Savage, who leaves broadcast booth & goes after Jake. Roberts ambushes & posts Randy, then ties him in ropes. Jake pulls out cobra, which "bites" Randy while picture is censored. Liz dashes to ringside & screams. Jake keeps holding off medics w. snake. Finally, Piper rolls Randy out while Vince suggests cobra not de-venomized. DRAW-PLUS.

(WCW/SYN) - [WCW PRO]: Cactus Jack d. Peter Dumas; Van Hammer d. Bob Cook; Rick Rude d. Todd Champion; (WNN) Gordon Solie on Barry Windham/Ron Simmons injuries, Gene Anderson death; (HANDICAP) Curtis Hughes d. Ian Weston/Terry Bronson; (WCW LT. HWT. TITLE) Brian Pillman d. Richard Morton to keep belt. RESTHOLD-PLUS. [WORLD WIDE]: {SUBMIT OR SURRENDER} Larry Zbyszko d. Curtis Thompson; Austin/Arn Anderson d. Rhodes/Bobby Eaton & Bobby turns on Dustin; P.N. News d. Mean Mark Canterbury. Station lost signal sporadically so other match results not available. NO RATING.

(WCW/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: Arachnabrad d. Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker; Rick Steiner d. Jim Davis; (CLASH/WCW WORLD TITLE) Lex Luger d. Steiner by hitting Rick w. title belt; (WCW TV TITLE) Steve Austin d. Jimmy Garvin; (CLASH) Luger attacks Sting; (SUBMIT OR SURRENDER) Sting d. Cactus Jack. POWERSLAM. [WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP]: {CLASH/WCW WORLD TAG TITLE} Ricky Steamboat/Dustin Rhodes d. Enforcers to win belts; Steamboat/Rhodes d. Mike Thor/Cook; P.N. News d. Pat Rose; (WCW MAGAZINE) Eric Bischoff w. Luger attack on Sting & Rude d. Sting for U.S. title; (CLASH) Cactus d. Van Hammer; Cactus d. Rick Ryder. After, Cactus tosses Rick out & chokes him but Hammer saves; Freebirds d. Patriots; (6-MAN) Arachnabrad/Tom Zenk/Big Josh d. York Foundation. After, Terry Taylor walks away, saying he doesn't need Yorks; Rude d. Joey Maggs; (SEG) Paul E. intros Dangerous Alliance: Rude/Arn/Eaton/Zbyszko/Austin. Steiner Bros. d. Luger/Hughes. DRAW. [MAIN EVENT]: Arachnabrad d. Lou Fabiano; (CLASH) Luger d. Steiner to retain WCW world title; (REPLAY) Barry Windham d. Zbyszko; (ROSS REPORT) Jim w. Harley Race/Hughes; Patriots d. Cook/Chris Sullivan; Hughes d. Steve Armstrong. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(USWA/WMC) - Robert Fuller/Mike Mitchell d. Shadow/Ken Raper; (FEATURE) Spirit of America Randy Lewis says he's cleaning up garbage. Eric Embry/Tony Falk dump trash in park. Randy picks it up as Kate Smith sings "God Bless America;" (REPLAY) Spirit d. Falk & dumps Tony in red-white-and-blue trash can, then sends Embry fleeing w. 2 clotheslines; Spirit d. Chris Frazier; (SEG) Reggie B. Fine says he's changed & become Candyman; (FEATURE) Nate the Rat/Gravedigger shovel dirt in cemetery; Nate pays off Scorpion to let Gravedigger take on Jeff Jarrett; Digger ties Jeff in ropes. Nate brings out blowtorch but Jeff escapes & burns Nate; (ANGLE) Jerry Lawler/Tom Prichard/Jarrett/Spirit "baste" Falk & feather him; (8-MAN) Lawler/Prichard/Candyman/Black Cat d. Embry/Falk/Scorpion/Sandman. DRAW.

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(GLOBAL/ESPN) - [Thu.]: {GLOBAL TV TITLE} Eddie Gilbert d. Bill Irwin by DQ when Irwin caught w. powder Eddie put in his hand. Al Perez & Irwin get Eddie in a rundown but Soultaker evens it up; Soultaker d. Tony George; Young d. Price by DQ; Big Bully Busick d. Garvin; Renegades d. Maulers but Maulers attack ref after & pile-drive Mark Youngblood on stage. DRAW.

(WWF/USA) - [SURVIVOR SERIES SHOWDOWN]: Will be covered in next issue.

LINES OF THE WEEK

1. Buddy Landell, ESPN, on Terry Garvin: "He's punching like a woman. No wonder he has to sell clothes on the side." 2. Jim Cornette, LPWA: "Joe, if you sick Wally Karbo on me, I'm gonna unplug the charger that runs his pace-maker." 3. Jim Ross, WCW PRO: "Cactus Jack—who graduated valedictorian from the Charles Manson School for Wayward Boys." 4. Randy Savage/Vince McMahon, SOW: (RS) "The winner gets a dinner with Skinner." (V) "You're quite a poet. Must run in the family." 5. Ross, PH, on camera-man being bumped from apron: "It looks like the Joey Chitwood Thrill Show. I liked that shot better than the infamous Refer-Eye Cam." 6. Joe Pedicino/Cornette, LPWA: (JP) "You reap what you sow." (JC) "I don't do my own sewing." 7. Freddie Blassie, LARRY KATZ SHOW, to Kimberly Murphy: "Get rid of Katz and that other pencil-necked geek and you and I will host the rest of the show." 8. Scott Hudson, PWTW: "Billy Jack Haynes' career has had more turns in it than Road Atlanta." 9. Rush Limbaugh, RUSH LIMBAUGH SHOW: "What does NWA stand for? You know, the loud rap group? I know what it used to stand for: National Wrestling Alliance." 10. Steven DeTruth, PWTW: "And substituting for Wynonna Judd this week is Scott Hudson."

11. DeTruth, PWTW: "Even Barry Windham is knocking on Lex Luger's door. Of course, he's using a different hand." 12. Craig Johnson, ESPN, on Gilbert hiding: "He thinks he's on LET'S MAKE A DEAL and wants what's behind the curtain." 13. DeTruth, PWTW: "Bill Kazmaier, your career guidance counselor called and said he made a big, big mistake." 14. Roddy Piper/Savage, SOW, on Bruno Wimpleman: (RS) "What agility!" (RP) "He runs away well." 15. DeTruth, PWTW, to Hudson: "I see you're getting the bull rolling this week." 16. DeTruth, PWTW: "Rick Steiner is a complete lunatic, which makes him a prime candidate for a WCW title." 17. Johnny B. Badd, WCW, on himself/P.N. News: "What a combination! A rappin' and a hookin'." 18. Bobby Heenan, WC, on Beefcake: "Nice hairstyle if you're going to the chair." 19. Ashley Kennedy, LPWA, to Chris Cruise: "Your glasses have the wrong prescription." 20. Jake Roberts, SOW, to Savage: "Only two things are keeping you away from this ring---good sense or fear."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Blassie, LKS, to caller asking what should be done with WCW: "Bring in two earth-movers and dump a load of dirt on it." 2. Hudson, PWTW: "Hopefully, no AIDS or steroids here as we take a look at the LPWA." 3. Harley Race, WME, on Curtis Hughes: "He can move better than Klinski."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. DeTruth, PWTW, on Mr. Madness: "Couldn't he use the name THE MIDNIGHT RIDER? I hear it's available, at least for the time being."

2. Caller, WLAC SPORTS SCENE, to Alex Marvez: "Can you tell me whatever happened to Tito Santana?" 3. Race, WME, on how to prepare for Hughes: "How do you prepare to wrestle a grizzly bear?"

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. BIG JOKE (DeTruth on Big Josh). 2. OLD BALDY (DeTruth on Hulk Hogan). 3. THE MILD BUNCH (DeTruth on The Wild Bunch). 4. OLD & IN THE WAY (DeTruth on Wild Bunch). 5. PUTRID PEONS (Rude on Center Stage fans). 6. SQUIRT (Ricky Steamboat on Paul E. Dangerously).

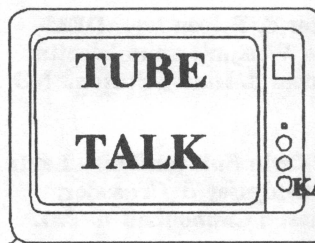
BEST VINCE McMAHON IMPERSONATION - Hudson, ESPN: "Haw--haw--haw--haaaa!"

BEST PICTURES - 1. WCW, Michael Hayes boogeying in the stands w. Center Stage fans. 2. GLOBAL, Eddie Gilbert dashing all over Globaldome stage to escape Bill Irwin. 3. WCW, Rick Steiner pinning Hughes. 4. WMC, Sandman hitting Black Cat w. ladder. 5. ESPN, Gilbert tossing powder in Irwin's hands. 6. ESPN, Gary Young hugging elderly fans. 7. WMC, Jarrett burning Nate. 8. WC, Sgt. Slaughter presenting flag to Duggan & their handshake.

WORST FEATURE - WMC, Spirit of America picking up trash to Kate Smith singing "God Bless America."

CLASS ACT AWARD - WCW, for acknowledging on-air the death of Gene Anderson.

BOO AWARDS - 1. WWF/SOW, for the Jake snakebite angle. Okay, so it got Jake over as a heavy heel---but at what price? Scaring the heck out of eight-year-old kids? The censored bit didn't help at all. The shots of kids crying were distasteful. This was worse than the Ultimate Warrior dungeon angle. 2. WCW, for running that annoying crowd noise track under a simple interview with Steamboat & Rhodes. When the audience is obviously sitting there listening to the interview, why try to fool us?



Florida's IWF has one more week of first-run shows left and the group has bagged its Thanksgiving tapings. Eddy Mansfield is said to be facing serious financial problems.... Baltimore radio's LARRY KATZ SHOW may soon have to find a new home.

WCAO-AM abruptly changed format to all-gospel last week and Larry's contract expires in six weeks....Speaking of Larry, Freddie Blassie was his guest Sunday night and was a scream....Knight-Ridder mat columnist Alex Marvez guested on our friend Charlie Mattos' SPORTS SCENE on WLAC-AM in Nashville Saturday night. Alex talked first about his coverage of the Florida Gators and the SEC but when he turned to wrestling, the phone lines jammed....Coming up Saturday on WCW: Johnny B. Badd's first babyface TV match, Patriots vs. Arn Anderson/Bobby Eaton, Brian Pillman vs. Cactus Jack, a Steve Austin-Arachna-brad TV title match and Ricky Steamboat/Dustin Rhodes vs. Terrence Taylor/Richard Morton....Steamboat will only work TV until after Christmas....Global aired on a Tuesday-Wednesday-Friday schedule this week on ESPN....Our phone poll on the CLASH drew a 94% positive rating, best in two years....A blooper award to us: we labeled last week's Issue No. 47 on the cover. We jumped the gun a week early....I hope all of you have a most wonderful Thanksgiving season and get your holidays off to a pleasant start. FSB.

Is It a 360-Degree Turn?

WILL CROCKETT RETURN AS G.M.?

ATLANTA---TBS and WCW sources are not saying but talk is increasingly spreading among WCW insiders of former NWA guru Jim Crockett returning to day-to-day reins of World Championship Wrestling as general manager.

Crockett held the post the first two months after TBS bought controlling interest in the mat company in 1988.

One scenario reportedly being discussed is for executive vice president Jim Herd to retain his title but be moved to a role overseeing marketing and pay-per-view enterprises for WCW. Herd's three-year contract as WCW chief expires in January but he is expected to be retained by TBS.

MATWATCH was unsuccessful in reaching WCW president Jack Petrik for comment at deadline but will attempt again this week.

THE RACE IS OVER?: In addition to dumping Jeannie Clarke and Terri Boatrigh (Alexandra York) and the phasedown of Teddy Long, sources tell MATWATCH Harley Race will be de-emphasized as a manager. Race was not with Curtis Hughes and Lex Luger on Saturday's TBS show. We're told Race will primarily be used for specials.

TEDDY'S TRAIL: Long will be used only sporadically until his contract expires. But insiders say he's definitely out as a regular.

THE DEAL: Steamboat's deal was not finalized until the afternoon of the CLASH but we're told money was not the issue it was when his July 1989 renewal talks failed.

AFTERCLASH: A full house at Center Stage Tuesday night but 313 paid in Richmond Thursday night and only an \$11,200 house in Washington Friday.

WHERE'S THE BLITZ?: One problem in addition to the usual reasons we cite for the weak crowds is virtually no advertising. WCW bought no ads in any Richmond paper for the show and no radio time was purchased.

THE SUPPORTING CAST: A couple of the undercard matches for the Dec. 3 San Antonio WWF pay-per-view have been released. Nothing special: Ted DiBiase/Repo Man vs. Virgil/Tito Santana, plus Davey Boy Smith vs. Warlord.

THE WHOLE WORKS: The San Antonio tickets list a 6 p.m. start, which means Titan will tape regular TV before and after the 7-8:50 p.m. (CST) pay show.

WEAK SUNSHINE: Titan drew two of its lowest Orlando and Tampa crowds ever Friday and Saturday. Friday in Orlando, 2,500 turned out for a horrible Savage-Roberts match. The next night in the Sun Dome, 3,500 showed for Duggan/Slaughter over Jake/Undertaker. Also, Chris Chavis had a win in the opener and Berzerker d. Chris Walker.

CURT'S IN: After SURVIVOR SERIES, expect Roddy Piper and Randy Savage to leave the SUPERSTARS broadcast booth and Curt Hennig to join Vince McMahon.

SCRAMBLED EGGS: WWF's Dec. 6 Memphis show isn't getting much help from ABC affil WHBQ. SUPERSTARS is bouncing all over the sked because of ABC sports. Three weeks ago, the show was on Sunday at 1:35 a.m., two weeks ago on Monday at 1 a.m. and last Sunday at 4 p.m. directly opposite CHALLENGE on WLMT. Show moves to permanent Saturdays at 5 this weekend.

GOODHART'S GANG: Well, at least at looked that way on the WMC show in Memphis Saturday. Black Cat (J.T. Smith) and The Sandman, both of whom regularly work Joel Goodhart's Philly shows, appeared. In addition, Reggie B. Fine has reverted to a face character, The Candyman.

MONDAY IN MEMPHIS: Candyman took on Leatherface in the opener; Smith went against Tony Falk; Tom Prichard faced the Sandman; and Robert Fuller teamed with newcomer Mike Mitchell (Young Gun) in a USWA tag title match vs. Doug Masters/Bart Sawyer.

ALSO MONDAY: Jeff Jarrett vs. Gravedigger; Eric Embry vs. Spirit of America (Randy Lewis) in a "trash can match;" Jerry Lawler put up the USWA title vs. Kimala and in an 8-man "turkey" match finale (the losing man was to be tarred and turkey-feathered), Lawler/Jarrett/Prichard/Spirit faced Embry/Kimala/Gravedigger/Falk.

ICWA TWICE: Florida's new group played to 100 in Bradenton Wednesday night. The Long Riders went to a no contest with Terminator (Marc Laurinidas) and Ricky Johnson and Pat Tanaka retained the light heavy title vs. Jim Backlund. At the Sportatorium the night before, Tanaka d. Backlund in a Tampa street fight, Johnson/Terminator d. Long Riders for the ICWA tag title and Dick Slater d. Kenny Kendall in an ICWA Florida tourney match.

THIS WEEK: Thanksgiving night, Slater was skedded vs. Allen Iron Eagle and a 6-man pitted Kevin Sullivan/Long Riders vs. Terminator/Johnson/Ron Slinker.

GLOBAL DECEMBER: Friday night at ESPN tapings for Dec. 16: a Black Bart-Bull Pain match and in a GWF tag title bout, Steve Simpson solo (with the WWF signing of Chris Walker) vs. John Tatum/Rod Price lost the belts. For the 23rd, The Bodysnatcher debuted vs. The Avenger (Jerry Lynn). 'Snatcher does a Mark Callaway-type tightrope walk. Also: Bill Irwin/Jeff Raitz vs. Sweet Daddy Falcone/Price in which Tatum gets involved. And a Simpson-Tatum bout.

THIS FRIDAY: Global tapes Dec. 14 & 21 syndies at THANKSGIVING THUNDER IN THE DOME. On tap: Lynn vs. Scott Anthony; Sam Houston vs. Pain with Nicola (Baby Doll) Smith in her hubby's corner; Lynn/Ben Jordan vs. Pat Tanaka/Chris Champion (The New Badd Co.); Irwin vs. Falcone; Patriot vs. Anthony for the N.A. title; a Chaz-Lightning Kid light heavy title match; Young/Irwin vs. Badd Co.; and Tug Taylor/Terry Garvin vs. Davis Bros. in a cage. Tatum/Price defend the tag belts vs. Simpson/Scott Putski.

THE WINNER: Barry Horowitz taped his first skit Friday as "The Winner," after getting his one and only GWF win. I can tell you, this is going to be a hilarious set of vignettes.

SUNCOAST SCENE: In Manatee FL Saturday, Jerry Flynn/Firecat d. Charlie Fields/Giant Outlaw to win the Suncoast Pro Florida tag title. Jumbo Baretta d. Rico Frederico to keep the Florida heavyweight belt. In a Southern title bout, Dean Malenko d. new champ Superstar (Bob Cook) by DQ.

Another Runaway

**RATINGS
RAP**

WCW POURS IT ON FOR 8TH VICTORY

The beat goes on. World Championship Wrestling may not be drawing huge arena crowds but it is bringing viewers to the Saturday afternoon TV table. For the week ending Nov. 19, CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS and WCW Saturday powered the TBS group to its eighth Nielsen ratings win in the last nine weeks.

WCW---led by a match where Johnny B. Badd KO'd Teddy Long and a Big Van Vader/Steve Austin vs. P.N. News/Tom Zenk contest---rolled to a 3.2 rating and 6 per cent share of audience, its highest Saturday rating in nearly eight months. The TBS Saturday evening show has virtually sewed up the ratings crown for the fourth quarter.

Runner-up WCW MAIN EVENT jumped 14% from the previous week with a 2.5/4.2.

As reported in **THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES**, WCW POWER HOUR narrowly missed upsetting WWF PRIME TIME WRESTLING. PRIME TIME, with its new McLaughlin Group-type format, held onto third-place with a 4% increase to a 2.3/3.4 but kept the nine-week average for PTW at 2.2.

POWER HOUR's 2.2/8.8 was an all-time high for its Saturday morning slot.

WWF ALL-AMERICAN WRESTLING trailed the pack, falling 20% to a 2.0/5.4.

CABLE

Week Ending Nov. 19	Rating/Share	Total Homes	Year Ago
WCW Clash XVII (TBS 11/19)	4.3/6.1	2.46 million	4.2/6.2
WCW World Champ. (TBS 11/16)	3.2/6.0	1.85 million	2.8/5.4
WCW Main Event (TBS 11/17)	2.5/4.2	1.44 million	2.5/4.3
WWF Prime Time (USA 11/18)	2.3/3.4	1.33 million	2.4/3.8
WCW Power Hour (TBS 11/16)	2.2/8.8	1.27 million	1.5/6.0
WWF All-American (USA 11/17)	2.0/5.4	1.16 million	2.0/5.3

SYNDICATION

Programs	Rating	Stations	U.S. Coverage
World Wrestling Federation	8.1	206	95%
WCW Wrestling Network	5.3	155	92%
Global Wrestling Federation	3.7	135	79%

CHRISTMAS SIX-PACK

How about a gift of the final six issues of **MATWATCH** to a friend or relative? As a special Christmas gift package (it must be to someone other than at your address), the final six (beginning with the Christmas double issue) will be \$5 for gifts only.

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CABLE/SATELLITE ERA

(Continued from Page 2)

the ideals of competition and decency. They are constantly faced with protecting their masks as if losing the mask will somehow strip them of their special powers, the way a comic book hero would be left defense-less without his cape.

In 1979, at the apparent peak of his popularity, Wrestling II defeat-ed Harley Race in an Omni match filmed for WTBS. However, a four-judge panel of former NWA champions deadlocked the decision when, in an intriguing angle, Dory Funk Jr.---who had been defeated in 1973 for the belt by Race---changed his vote to favor Race. One-time rival Cowboy Bill Watts ruled because of the "Injustice," II would receive a Champion of Champions Cup and proclaimed the masked man "the greatest champion of all even without the world title belt."

In the summer of 1982, Ted Turner actually quizzed his wrestling producers whether they could do without the NWA sanctioning body and declare their own champions, considering the reach of TBS now expanding to 20-million homes. The NWA banner remained but the weekly Georgia show was rechristened **WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING** and the Georgia heavyweight and tag team champions were supplanted with "national" belts and the Georgia TV title evolved into the "world" television championship.

In perhaps Wrestling II's last significant match on the SuperStation ---in February 1983---he put up his mask vs. "\$25,000" offered by then national heavyweight champion Larry Zbyszko. Scheduled as an elimination tag bout, II and Pez Whatley faced Zbyszko and Tully Blanchard, in for a guest appearance. In the tradition of Shakespearean catharsis, Whatley was eliminated and II was left to do battle alone against Blanchard and Zbyszko. Staving off his attackers for nine minutes until Blanchard was disqualified, II was left for the final shootout with Zbyszko. At the 17-minute mark, Zbyszko illegally grabbed the ropes for leverage and scored the fatal three count, an apparent end to the 10-year legend. However, Woods left his mikeside post and told the referee, who restarted the match and II schoolboyed Larry Z for the dramatic fall. The battle still stands as the highest-rated bout of a weekly cable wrestling series, drawing a 6.8 rating, though its 1.49 million homes has long been topped.

(In the final two parts of 50 YEARS OF MAT TV, the emergence of the WWF and a small Texas promotion on national cable, and the infamous Black Saturday.)

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